

- (a) feeding a feed stream consisting essentially of at least 99.9 wt.% isopropyl alcohol into a separation column;
- (b) separating said isopropyl alcohol into an overhead stream taken overhead from said separation column and a bottoms stream taken as bottoms from said separation column, wherein any isopropyl alcohol in said overhead stream and said bottoms stream is not high purity isopropyl alcohol; and
- (c) removing said high purity isopropyl alcohol at a point:
 - (i) below where said feed stream enters said separation column but above said bottoms stream, or
 - (ii) above where said feed stream enters said separation column but below said overhead stream,
 wherein said high purity isopropyl alcohol has a metals content of less than about 1 ppb and a water content of less than about 100 ppm.

REMARKS

Claims 1 through 10 are pending in the present application. Claims 11-20 are cancelled without disclaimer or prejudice.

Applicants thank Examiner Manoharan for the courtesy of a telephone interview on January 15, 2003 and for agreeing to having a telephone interview upon receipt of the enclosed amended claims if the Examiner has any further questions of patentability for the amended claims.

Claim 1 has been amended in subsection 1(a) to change "comprising" to "consisting essentially of." Kagiya (U.S. Patent 4,788,043) and Marker (U.S. Patent 5,585,527) have feeds with 10 to 40 weight % water and 82 mass % respectively. These references fail to teach or suggest "a feed stream consisting essentially of at least 99.9 wt.% isopropyl alcohol."

It is respectfully submitted that Adams fails to cure the deficiencies in both Kagiya and Marker, in that it also fails to disclose or suggest a process for producing high purity IPA by